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flames. It is not difficult to reconcile a theory such as this with that of Arrhenius.

ALFRED SANG

RECESSIVE CHARACTERS

FOR the past two years there has been exhibited at the Trenton (New Jersey) Agricultural Show a cow without trace of the body hairs. This cow was crossed with a normal bull, according to the owner, Mr. Frank Fraunfelter, of Pennsylvania, and a male calf was born last September which has the ordinary hairy coat. This result indicates that the presence of the hair follicles is dominant over their absence. This adds another case to the law that the presence of a quality is dominant over its absence or that a retrogressive or retarded condition is recessive to the more developed conditions. C. B. DAVENPORT

QUOTATIONS

THE PRESIDENCY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

THE Institute of Technology has now solved a problem of some delicacy and difficulty in selecting for the head of that institution Professor Richard C. MacLaurin, at present at the head of the mathematical physics department of Columbia University, and he has accepted the honor and the responsibility. The institute has been under capable direction during the nearly two years that have elapsed since the resignation of President Pritchett. Acting President Noyes has maintained its high standards and manifested a degree of executive skill that probably would have given him the full title and lodged the full authority of the position in his hands had he been disposed to accept them. But his chosen field of chemical research has possessed more attractions for him. In it he has opportunity to blaze new trails in scientific advance, and he is to be commended for his clear and loyal following of his own light and leading in this matter.

The new president evidently understands in its general features the nature of the work to which he has been called, and his record in educational service indicates that he is one

who readily becomes master of detail. The experience will be not less new to him than to the institution, which now for the first time will be under the direction of a man born in another country and trained in foreign schools and universities. That is not necessarily an objection. It may prove a positive gain. Professor MacLaurin is a comparatively young man. His attainments are more than excellent; they are extraordinary, and few men of his years have won more flattering recognition from sources that bear the stamp of authority.

Of course, mere scholarship, even of the highest order, is not enough to meet all the requirements of this new responsibility. His executive ability and his adaptability can be proved only by actual service. But Scotch scholars are thorough; their standards are high and shrewdness and personal tact are among their national characteristics. When Princeton called Dr. McCosh to the presidency, he was a man well along in years, but a famous metaphysician, and he filled the place with distinction. The institute does not need metaphysicians, and the new president has not turned his researches in that direction. He has made great advances in modern science; he is learned in the principles of law and is undoubtedly an enthusiast with respect to the various lines of research with which he has been so conspicuously identified. The institute authorities, the alumni and the public have a well-grounded hope that under his administration a new era of prosperous service will open up for this famous school.—*The Boston Transcript*.

BURDENS OF COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

PRESIDENT ELIOT'S impending retirement from the presidency of Harvard is bound to give an impetus to the movement to divide the functions of that office. "The governing boards and the alumni will understand better in six months than they do even now what a void Eliot will leave," writes one of the most prominent of the Boston alumni. But this is not only because Mr. Eliot towers above all other college presidents and is the foremost American citizen. The magnitude of his office is such that it would be a most difficult

task to fill it, had it been held by a man of far smaller intellectual calibre. The administrative work alone would tax the abilities of our greatest corporation heads, while the outlining of its courses of study calls for educational statesmanship of the first rank. . . .

In President Eliot's case, he has borne the multifarious burdens, including the duty of meeting with the governing bodies and the faculty, at the expense, we are tempted to say, of the student body. By this we mean no criticism; it is a fact, however, that he has generally been a stranger, or a great name, to the undergraduate body. Close relations with it have been humanly impossible; all one could ask was the necessary intercourse with the leaders of the teaching staff of *only* 566 persons. So when one of the leading undergraduates was asked by a reporter the opinion of that body as to the president's retirement, he naively answered to the effect that "few of us know him, but all regret the change"! True, Mr. Eliot has for some years past annually met the newly entering class with one of those exquisite addresses of counsel and inspiration that will have high place among the enduring monuments he has, unconsciously enough, builded to himself. But beyond that the influence of his noble personality and his lofty personal life have penetrated to the undergraduate hardly more than to the general public all over the country. This has been a grave loss to college and nation, for the moulding of character is, after all, the primary duty of a university; even of a teacher of science, as Professor Arthur A. Noyes of the Institute of Technology admirably points out in the current *SCIENCE*. "To begin with," he says, "we [the teachers] set him [the student] the example of rendering unselfish service to others by giving him individual aid. . . ." And it is individual moral aid that the Harvard student often so sadly lacks. Who in our time has been better fitted to extend it than President Eliot?

Then there is the faculty. It takes a great general to inspire 566 teachers; to recruit their forces, to recognize the worthy and discard the drones or the inefficient; to lead them on over the breastworks of tradition to new

fields of honor and of service. That would seem in itself to be a sufficient life's work for any one man. And so we confess to having been surprised to learn last year that a majority of a joint committee of the Overseers and the corporation, including President Eliot, found, after inquiry, that "the president of the university does not need to be relieved of any function that he now performs; but that he ought to be relieved of details in many directions, and to have more assistance than he now has." Would they have been able to report the same with any one else as president? Will the governing boards not yet come to filling President Eliot's place with two men, one a rector in charge of everything pertaining to the scholastic work, the students, and the teachers, and the other a man of the type of the late William H. Baldwin, Jr., of the Long Island Railway, of marked business ability, of winning and upright personality—qualified to represent the university in all of its relations to the public and the nation?—New York *Evening Post*.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

First Course in Biology. By L. H. BAILEY and W. M. COLEMAN. New York, The Macmillan Co. 1908.

The present work is divided into three parts, the first of which is devoted to botany and is written by Professor Bailey, while the second and third parts dealing respectively with zoology and physiology are by Professor Coleman. As is remarked in the preface, there is a tendency in secondary education to introduce unit courses in biology in place of isolated courses in botany, zoology and physiology, and the authors have aimed to prepare a book which presents the elements of biology as exemplified by plants, animals and man, rather than separate treatises on different fields of biological science. The book is designed to afford material for three half years, but the ground may be covered in a single year by omitting the matter in fine print.

There is a useful introductory chapter on the elementary facts of chemistry which are essential for the understanding of the bio-